

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Original) An electron microscope, comprising:  
a main vacuum chamber housing a stage therein and connected to a vacuum pump;  
a load lock for loading a specimen into said main vacuum chamber;  
a minicolumn non-translatably positioned inside said main chamber; and  
a vacuum pump situated inside the main vacuum chamber and external to and connected to the minicolumn.

2. (Currently Amended) An electron microscope comprising:  
a main vacuum chamber housing a stage therein and connected to a vacuum pump;  
a load lock for loading a specimen into said main vacuum chamber; and  
a plurality of minicolumns non-translatably positioned orthogonal to the stage ~~inside said main chamber, wherein each of said minicolumns has a lens arrangement consisting essentially of a plurality of conducting electrodes and at least one insulator interposed between said conducting electrodes, and wherein said lens arrangement is of a diameter no larger than three centimeters and height of no more than one centimeter.~~

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

Please add the following new claims:

5. (New) The electron microscope of claim 2, wherein each of said minicolumns has a lens arrangement consisting essentially of a plurality of conducting electrodes and at least one insulator interposed between said conducting electrodes, and wherein said lens arrangement is of a diameter no larger than three centimeters and height of no more than one centimeter.

6. (New) The electron microscope of claim 2, wherein the minicolumns are positioned inside the main chamber.